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REMARKS

This Amendment is responsive to the Final Office Action dated September 24, 2003. All rejections and objections of the Examiner are respectfully traversed. Reconsideration of all pending claims is respectfully requested.

At paragraphs 1-2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-2, 4-10, 12-18, 20-25 and 27-31 for obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), citing Fig. 3 in the present application, in combination with specific pages of "Internetworking with TCP/IP" by Douglas E. Comer ("Comer"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Fig. 3 in the present application illustrates the longstanding approach to distributing Link State Announcements (LSAs). As shown in Fig. 3, previous solutions for conveying LSAs involved use of a "stop-and-wait" mechanism, in which one device sent a single LSA to a neighbor device, and then waited until that LSA was acknowledged before sending another LSA to that neighbor. Comer describes various aspects of sliding windows in the context of stream transmission.

Nowhere in the combination of the disclosure of Fig. 3 in the present application and the teachings of Comer is there disclosed any system or method for applying a sliding window protocol to the distribution of link state advertisement protocol messages, as in the present independent claims 1, 4, 7, 15, 23 and 30. The disclosure of Fig. 3 in the present application simply describes the existing use of stop and wait protocols in the distribution of link state advertisement messages. The fact that such a protocol has long been in use in this regard indicates that previous techniques were considered adequate, and that there was no perceived

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need to apply any other techniques to link state protocol message processing. The simplicity of the "stop and wait" approach of previous systems was advantageous in terms of limiting the complexity required to handle such protocol messages, thus keeping development costs low, and conserving processing resources for processing messages in the data path. Similarly, Comer includes no indication that the more complex sliding window techniques he describes would be appropriate or desirable outside the context of data message processing. As stated in Comer, the sliding windows discussed therein are intended to make "stream transmission" efficient, for the purpose of improving network bandwidth utilization. As it is generally known, in the area of communication systems, a "stream" is a group of contiguous data. See the enclosed definition of "stream" from the online TechEncyclopedia. The link state advertisement messages of the present independent claims 1, 4, 7, 15, 23 and 30 are not part of such a "stream" of data, but are *advertisements of link state* information, used as part of the well known "link state advertisement protocol". Thus the techniques that Comer describes for use in a "stream" would not be considered applicable in the area of link state advertisement messages as described in connection with Fig. 3 of the present application.

For the above reasons, Applicant respectfully urges that the combination of Fig. 3 and the associated description in the present application, and Comer, fails to disclose or suggest all the elements of the presently claimed invention as set forth in claims 1, 4, 7, 15, 23 and 30. Accordingly, the combination of Fig. 3 of the present application and Comer fails to support a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103. As to claims 2, 5-6, 7-10, 12-14, 16-18, 20-22, 24-25 and 27-29 and 31, they each depend from claims 1, 4, 7, 15, 23 and 30, and are believed to be patentable over the combination of Comer and Fig. 3 of the present application for at least the same reasons.

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At paragraph 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 3, 11, 19 and 26 for obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), again citing Comer and Fig. 3 of the present application, and further citing United States Patent number 6,266,701 B1 of Sridhar et al. ("Sridhar et al."). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As noted above, the combination of Comer and Fig. 3 of the present application fails to disclose or suggest the use of any sliding window protocol techniques in the processing of link state advertisement messages, as the present independent claims 1, 7, 15, and 23, from which claims 3, 11, 19 and 26 depend. Sridhar et al. disclose a system for improving throughput on a data network, and provide some description regarding sliding window protocols. However, like the other cited references, Sridhar et al. include no hint or suggestion of even the desirability of applying any type of sliding window protocol in the context of link state advertisement messages, as in the present independent claims. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully urges that the combination of Comer, the present Fig. 3, and Sridhar et al. fails to support a *prima facie* case of obviousness with regard to the present independent claims 1, 7, 15 and 23. As claims 3, 11, 19 and 26 depend from those independent claims, they are believed to be patentable over the combined references for at least the same reasons. Reconsideration of all pending claims is respectfully requested.

Applicant has made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone David A. Dagg, Applicants' Attorney at 978-264-6664 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

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For these reasons, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Date

David A. Dagg  
David A. Dagg, Reg. No. 37,809  
Attorney/Agent for Applicant(s)  
Steubing McGuinness & Manaras LLP  
125 Nagog Park Drive  
Acton, MA 01720  
(978) 264-6664

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